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[161] Today, the Dominica Caribs' sexual selection is limited not only by the smallness of their community (about 400 including half-breeds: men, women, and children), but by a growing disapproval of marriage between close cousins, expressed in the usual way, by ridicule. Nevertheless, unions of a more or less permanent nature between first cousins, half and even full siblings, and of mother and daughter with the same man, have occurred and been tolerated within recent times. There appears to subsist the feeling, moreover, that cross-cousins are "less family" than parallel-cousins; and one old woman expounded to me the widespread belief in the genetic inheritance of father's "spirit" and mother's "blood." Sister exchange is not infrequent, while marriage of two brothers to two sisters is extraordinarily common. I know of at least two cases in which a man has children with his wife's unmarried sister; and I should estimate that polygyny (extra-legal, of course) in general is as frequent today as it ever was, being confined, as is natural, to better-than-average bread-winning males.

883 Once school is left behind (12 to 15 years of age), opportunities for anything but furtive meetings between the sexes are rare. The young men spend their days at sea, or working in the high-woods, while the girls, together with their mothers, work around the house, or plant, weed, and reap in provision-gardens scattered far and wide. Neighborly visiting is not common—partly because of petty inter-family feuds, and partly because local standards of hospitality require an exchange of presents between visitor and hostess every time a call is made. The monthly church mass at Salybia, occasional wakes and dances, and the young men's "serenale" on fine moonlit nights are about the only relaxations known. The latter is the name given to promenading bands who make the round of neighboring houses to the accompaniment of Basque tambourines and flutes.

584 Should a young man call at the home of a prospective sweetheart (or of one whose relationship with him was unknown to her parents), he would not mention her, nor would she appear unless called in from the kitchen or back room by her mother or father. Should his visit coincide with a mealtime (at which even strangers present in the yard are always asked to participate), it would be a sure indication that his suit was acceptable, if the girl herself were sent to serve him food and drink. But in no case would either display any affection before others, although clumsy and to us coarse sexual jokes might not be out of place. No tasks are required of a girl's suitor today, though the old people say that former custom required him to limit his attentions to a bi-monthly visit for some time; and that it was his duty to sweep the yard before his sweetheart's house before leaving after these occasions.

• [522]